

Letter

Wilbur Ross, Secretary
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Secretary Ross,

As a concerned diver and Project AWARE supporter, I urge you to act in the best interests of our vulnerable ocean ecosystem and valuable dive tourism industry by protecting our most imperiled shark populations. I am deeply concerned that the U.S. government has been opposing urgent actions advised by scientists to prevent the collapse of endangered North Atlantic shortfin mako sharks.

Before the pandemic, the economic value of the U.S. dive tourism had been estimated at \$11 billion. As we adapt to save our industry and look forward to robust reopening, we are keenly aware that improving ocean health and preventing further depletion of key predators is paramount to our success. Obstructing international action on mako sharks not only harms the population, but risks cascading negative effects on the ecosystem and the responsible, sustainable businesses that depend on it.

It saddens me to see the U.S. slide from its leadership role as a science-based, global champion of shark conservation. Please reconsider your stance and act immediately to ban mako retention in U.S. East coast fisheries and promote the same remedy at international negotiations for the North Atlantic.

Thank you,

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Email

If you would like to email Wilbur Ross, the best option is to email the point of contact for the Office of the Secretary: rhill@doc.gov - if the email bounces back please email rhill9@doc.gov